



CALLING THE SHOTS

Winter Issue



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Sharp-Shooter of the Quarter: Frank Baum, MD

Editor's note: "Sharp Shooter of the Quarter" is a new feature of "Calling the Shots" that shares successful immunization practices of our local VFC providers.

By Heather Winfield-Smith

Dr. Frank Baum, pediatrician, trained at the Children's Hospital of Los Angeles. He has operated a solo practice in Kahului, Maui since 1985, and has approximately 4,500 patients between the ages of 0 and 18 years. We asked Dr. Baum a few questions about his immunization practices. Here's what he had to say:

SHOTS: When we performed your VFC/AFIX site visit in June 2002, 30 of the 30 immunization records we screened were up-to-date. What strategies do you employ to ensure that your patients receive all of their immunizations on time?

Dr. Baum: I have tried to use every patient interaction as a potential chance to vaccinate. I have tried to instill the importance of that concept to my staff (nurse, receptionist and bookkeeper). Anytime we open a patient's chart, we try to check on their vaccine status and last physical exam. If they are past due, or will be due soon, we remind them to make their appointment.

SHOTS: What are your biggest challenges in maintaining high immunization rates?

Dr. Baum: Parents' resistance to multiple vaccinations; the lack of availability of all vaccines; children changing physicians; parental concerns that vaccines should not be given when children are ill; and some parents still have fears about vaccinations, no matter how much education and information we provide.

SHOTS: Do you contact patients that miss appointments? By what means?

Dr. Baum: The receptionist will contact parents by phone if an appointment is missed. If the parent has a history of forgetting appointments, we will call a day or two before to remind them. If they do not show up, the receptionist calls the house and continues to call until she talks to a person; we don't just leave a message on an answering machine to call the office.

SHOTS: How do you address or follow-up with patients who are due or overdue for vaccinations?

Dr. Baum: If they miss more than two appointments for vaccinations, I write a personal letter and tell them why it is important to keep the appointment. The personal note is very effective when we are trying to complete the vaccine series for school (4 and 5 year-olds).

SHOTS: Do you assess and administer immunizations during follow-up visits and acute care visits, as well as well-child visits?

Dr. Baum: I try to give the appropriate vaccination(s) at any opportunity if a child is behind or due. This includes sick and well visits. We also encourage the older children to just come in for a vaccination, and schedule a physical at a later time if our schedule is too crowded. We try to teach parents to make physicals close to the child's birth date, not just the usual summer physical for sports and camp. It helps make the schedule more manageable.

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Mark Your Calendars:

Vaccines for Children (VFC) Provider Update 2003
Wednesday, January 22 or Thursday, January 23, 2003

Presenters: Loriann Kanno, PharmD and Marcia Nagao, MD, MPH

This course is designed specifically for Hawaii VFC Providers, and provides a comprehensive overview of key Vaccines for Children Program issues.

Topics will include:

- Vaccine management
- Advisory Committee on Immunization Practice (ACIP) recommendations on vaccine administration
- Vaccine Adverse Event Reporting System (VAERS)
- National Childhood Vaccine Injury Act (NCVIA) requirements on vaccine administration documentation
- VFC vaccine ordering procedures

See enclosed flyer for details, or call 586-8323.



Epidemiology & Prevention of Vaccine-Preventable Diseases

Thursdays, February 13, 20, 27, & March 6, 2003

Presented by the CDC National Immunization Program

This popular 4-session broadcast equips clinic/office/hospital staff with an in-depth look at **immunization** — a must for new immunization providers, and a thorough review for experienced physicians and their staff. Dr. Bill Atkinson, from CDC/NIP, will be one of the keynote speakers.

Topics will include:

- Principles of vaccination
- General recommendations on immunization
- Immunization strategies for healthcare providers
- Vaccine safety issues

Every registered participant will receive a free copy of
The Pink Book, 2002 edition.

**How to register — see enclosed flyer for details,
or call 586-8323.**



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SHOTS: Who administers vaccines in your office (i.e., MD, NP, RN, MA, etc.)?

Dr. Baum: I have been giving all of the vaccinations myself for the last 17 years. My medical assistant is just starting to give vaccines to the teens. It allows me to spend a little more time with the patients and gives me insight into how the family handles a crying child. The parents really seem to like the idea that I give the vaccinations; perhaps that makes vaccinations seem more important.

SHOTS: At most, how many vaccines will you administer at one time?

Dr. Baum: Depending on how many are due, and of which type. Five has been the most, especially if Prevnar is needed. Prevnar seems to cause the most reactions — fever and sore muscles.

SHOTS: Do you provide training to your staff regarding immunizations?

Dr. Baum: Yes. We have monthly meetings to review office procedures and I use that opportunity to stress vaccinations and any changes in vaccine availability.

SHOTS: Do you have any suggestions or helpful hints for your fellow immunization providers?

Dr. Baum: Take pride in having your patients completely vaccinated. I try to beat the "standard" percentages for coverage, both in Hawaii and in the US. It has become my goal, so I use every opportunity to vaccinate my patients.

SHOTS: Is there anything that you would like to add that we didn't cover?

Dr. Baum: I still have some parents who refuse to vaccinate their children. I feel frustrated and have not found a way to convince them of the importance of vaccinations. I still see them at the routine time intervals for PE's and I have developed a form that they must sign stating that they know which vaccines need to be given at that visit and why they have decided not to vaccinate their child. I hope that reading and writing their reason for not vaccinating and signing their name makes them think twice about vaccinations.



Have you updated your VFC profile? . . . To avoid possible interruption in the delivery of your VFC vaccines, please submit your updated VFC Provider Enrollment and Profile forms today!

Immunization Quiz
Will you get an A+?

- | True | False | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 1. Mild illness is a reason to withhold vaccination. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 2. If a mother is breastfeeding, she shouldn't be vaccinated. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 3. A child's temperature should be checked routinely before vaccinations are administered. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 4. A pregnancy test should be performed routinely for adolescent females before giving MMR/varicella vaccines. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 5. If there is an immunosuppressed child in the household, siblings should be given MMR and varicella vaccines. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 6. If the first dose of Hepatitis B vaccine was given more than one year ago, and no subsequent doses were given, you should repeat the first dose. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 7. MMR and varicella vaccines can be given to a child whose mother is pregnant. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 8. When a person has an injury and needs protection against tetanus, tetanus toxoid (Tt) should be used instead of tetanus toxoid combined with diphtheria toxoid (Td). |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 9. All health care workers who have contact with patients and who have no contraindications should receive influenza vaccine every year. |

